of transparency and Most Favoured Nation (MFN) treatment. Some major participants have sought MFN exemptions *inter alia* for the transport sector, basic telecommunications and financial services. They have nevertheless indicated that they may be willing to withdraw most of their requests for MFN exemptions provided the final offers of other participants are to their satisfaction. India is not seeking access in these sectors. Attempts to seek derogation from MFN obligations have further complicated the negotiations in the Urugay Round.

A few countries have indicated that they are willing to accept the compromise proposals put forward by DG GATT subject to the successful completion of market access negotiations in goods and initial commitments in services. DG GATT had proposed a four track approach to conclude the negotations. Track I was meant for market access negotiations on goods, Track II for similar negotiations on services, Track III for legal drafting and Track IV for improvements in the text. Some participants have indicated their intention of seeking improvements in the compromise proposals. Discussions among participants on market access issues in respect of both goods and services are going on lackadaisically along with technical legal work. Track IV has not been activated. The major participants continue to differ on the provisions of the draft agreement on agriculture.

Government's stand on the compromise proposals put forward by DG GATT has not yet been finalised.

Interest Rate on General Provident Fund

*37. SHRI SYED SIBTEY RAZI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that public Sector as well as private sector banks are paying 12 per cent interest on deposits for 12 months to 24 months;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that Government have been paying 12 per cent interest to its employees on their deposits in the General Provident Fund;

(d) whether Government propose to enhance the rate of interest on deposits in General Provident Fund to encourage savings in GPF amongst Government employees; and

(e) if so, what are the details thereof and if not, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SAHNTARAM PODUKHE): (a) and (b) A statement is laid on the Table of the House. (See below).

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) and(e) No Sir, Interest rates on bank deposits and Provident funds are not strictly comparable as the latter enjoy many other advantages.

Statement

Prior to 22nd April, 1992 fixed rates of interest were prescribed for term deposits for three maturity period in the range of 11.0 per cent per annum to 13.0 per cent per annum. As a step towards further rationalisation of deposit rates, the number of rates prescribed is being reduced. It has been decided by RBI that effective from April 22, 1992, the deposit rates for maturity of 46 days to 3 years and above are to be determined by the commercial banks themselves in accordance witn the guidelines of RBI. These may vary from one bank to another and is not to exceed 1

per cent. The old and the revised structure of deposit rates excluding FCNR/NRE accounts are set out below:

Catagory of Account	Existing Rates	New Rates (Effective April, 22, 1992)
(Per cent per Annum)		
Scheduled Commercial Bank's Interest Rates on Deposits (Excluding FCNR/NRE)		
Current	Nil	Nil
Savings	5.0	5.0 (6% w.e.f. 24-4-1992)
Term Deposits		
(a) 46 days to less than one year	11.0	Not exceeding 13.0
(b) One year to less than three years	12.0	
(c) Three years and over	13.0	

Boom in Stock Market

*38. SHRI SARADA MOHANTY:

SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what are the reasons for the unprecedented boom in stock market all over India; and

(b) whether the present boom in the stock market is likely to strengthen the capital formation, particularly in industries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) The general increase in prices of shares of companies listed on the Stock Exchanges was mainly on account of the expectations of the investors generated by the improvement of overall economic environment and the rise in the level of foreign exchange reserves. The relatively low level of floating stock in the stock market and the excess of funds flowing into the market also contributed significantly to this increase.

(b) A healthy capital market is indicative of favourable investment climate and as such is conducive to the growth of capital formation. However, excessive fluctuations in stock market prices can give rise to undue uncertainty and dampen investor confidence.

Huge Quantity of Imported Goods lying in different Warehouses

*39. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that huge quantity of imported goods of slow-moving nature for sale at ITDC Duty Free Shops, are lying in different warehouses and ITDC has paid and is paying duty as well as penalty even upto 200 per cent on them since their bonding period has already expired;

(b) if so, what is the factual position in respect of the above and the quantum of amount the ITDC has paid towards duty and penalty charges till